

## **GUIDELINES FOR CALLING THE CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE**

Mandated reporters and other persons should call the Montana Child and Family Services Division's Centralized Intake (CI) Hotline when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected. The CI Hotline Specialist will determine if the information given by the reporter meets the legal requirement to initiate an investigation.

### **CRITERIA NEEDED FOR A CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATION**

- The alleged victim is a child under the age of 18.
- The alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver, paramour, any individual residing in the same home, and/or any person responsible for the child's welfare at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect.
- There is a specific incident of abuse or neglect or a specific set of circumstances involving suspected child abuse or neglect.
- There is demonstrated harm to the child or substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

### **INFORMATION THE REPORTER SHOULD HAVE READY TO GIVE TO THE CI HOTLINE**

- Names, birth dates (or approximate ages), races, genders, etc. for all adults and child subjects
- Addresses for all victims and perpetrators, including current locations
- Information about the siblings or other family members if available
- Specific information about the abuse incident or the circumstances contributing to the risk of harm-for example, when the incident occurred, the extent of the injuries, how the child says it happened, and any other pertinent information.

**If this information is not readily available, the reporter should not delay a call to the CI Hotline.**

### **MONTANA CENTRALIZED INTAKE HOTLINE**

**1-866-820-KIDS OR 1-800-820-5437**

**TTY 1-866-341-8811**

**The Montana CFSD Centralized Intake Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Reporters should be prepared to provide telephone numbers where they may be reached throughout the day in case a Child Protection Specialist needs to call back for more information.**